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Final EIS for Montana Alberta Tie Transmission Line Released

(HELENA) – Governor Brian Schweitzer announced that today the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) released the final environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. transmission line.

“Once the anticipated approvals are in place for MATL and the construction is completed, the presence of the transmission line will trigger a billion dollars of wind power development in the northcentral Montana area between Great Falls and Lethbridge,” said Governor Schweitzer.

“The 600 Megawatts of wind power that will fill the line would represent a 400% increase in Montana’s current commercial wind power production. Development of ‘clean & green’ energy from renewable and alternative energy sources is part of a plan for Montana to assist in the international effort to deal with global climate change, the national concern over energy security and independence, and the Montana objective of creating economic activity in areas of the state which have suffered from chronic economic dislocation. Integral to the effort is the development of energy delivery infrastructure such as the MATL transmission line.” the Governor said.

Montana Alberta Tie Ltd. (MATL) submitted a Presidential permit application to DOE and a Montana Major Facility Siting Act application to DEQ to construct an electric transmission line. The MATL proposal is to construct, operate, and maintain a 230-kV transmission line between Lethbridge, Alberta, and Great Falls, Montana. As proposed, the Montana portion of the 130-mile transmission line would extend from the Montana–Alberta border northeast of Cut Bank to an existing substation just north of Rainbow Dam near Great Falls.

DOE will issue a Record of Decision no sooner than 30 days after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes a Notice of Availability of this Final EIS in the *Federal Register*. DEQ will issue its decision no sooner than 15 days after publication of the Final EIS.

The Final EIS is available on the DOE website at www.gc.doe.gov/nepa/documentspub.html and on the DEQ website at <http://deq.mt.gov/MFS/MATL.asp>. Persons on the project mailing list will receive copies in the mail.

For further information on the EIS or to request additional copies or a CD, please contact Mrs. Ellen Russell, NEPA Document Manager, U.S. Dept. of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20585, call 202-596-9624, or e-mail Ellen.Russell@hq.doe.gov, or contact Greg Hallsten at DEQ Director's Office, PO Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901, phone 406-444-3276, or e-mail ghallsten@mt.gov.

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